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FIFTY-SECOND SESSION

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SIXTH COMMITTEE
2nd meeting
held on
Monday, 22 September 1997
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TOMKA (Slovakia)

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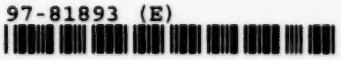

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The CHAIRMAN, noting that the Sixth Committee and the International Law Commission, whose fiftieth anniversary was being commemorated by the General Assembly at the current session, had made a great contribution to the work of the United Nations in the normative realm, said that the items allocated to the Committee at the current session included the new challenges that the international community had entrusted to the two bodies, such as the establishment of an international criminal court and the elaboration of measures to eliminate international terrorism.

2. In that regard, he hoped that he could count on the cooperation and sense of responsibility of all members of the Committee in carrying out the duties entrusted to him.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

3. The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Rolf Welberts (Germany) and Mr. Ghassan Obeid (Syrian Arab Republic) had been nominated for the offices of Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur respectively. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Welberts (Germany) as Vice-Chairman and Mr. Obeid (Syrian Arab Republic) as Rapporteur, and to take up the election of a second Vice-Chairman at its next meeting.

4. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.6/52/L.1)

5. The CHAIRMAN said that at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly the Committee had managed to reduce by more than half the number of meeting hours lost as a result of late starts or short meetings as compared to the previous year, and he expressed the hope that he could rely on the cooperation of delegations to maintain and further improve the efficiency of the Committee's work. Indeed, as a result of the economy measures adopted by the General Assembly, the Committee would hold a total of five to seven meetings a week, depending on how Conference Services allocated weekly meetings in the light of the requirements of the other Main Committees and subcommittees, as well as the availability of services. The Committee's work would have to be organized efficiently, since fewer meetings had been scheduled for it than at the previous session.

6. After explaining in detail the proposed timetable for the consideration of items referred to the Committee and the relevant documentation, he said that the timetable was intended to be flexible and could be amended in the light of progress made in the Committee's work and of the number of statements made during the consideration of various items. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposed timetable.

7. It was so decided.

8. The CHAIRMAN, referring to agenda item 152 (Measures to eliminate international terrorism), said that there was broad agreement among delegations to nominate Mr. Philippe Kirsch (Canada) for the office of Chairman of the working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/210. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Kirsch as Chairman of the working group.

9. It was so decided.

10. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, pursuant to paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 51/210, the Ad Hoc Committee was open to all States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency and suggested that the Committee should adopt a similar approach with respect to the composition of the working group.

11. It was so decided.

12. The CHAIRMAN, referring to agenda item 146 (United Nations Decade of International Law), said that the General Assembly, at its fifty-first session, had requested the working group of the Sixth Committee on the item to continue its work at the fifty-second session in accordance with its mandate and methods of work. He suggested that the Committee should defer action on the item pending the outcome of the consultations that he intended to conduct concerning the chairmanship of that working group.

13. Mr. RAO (India) said it was his understanding that, apart from the establishment of those two working groups, the Committee was supposed to consider the establishment of a working group as part of its consideration of agenda item 151 which came within the scope of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that the establishment of the two working groups was mandated by General Assembly resolutions. It was understood that their establishment did not prejudge any action that the Committee might later take concerning other agenda items.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.